

Can They Live Here?

This lesson is related to "Snips and Snags" in the November issue of Outside In. Students research the habitat needs of several species and determine if they are found in their outdoor classroom. Students then develop and carry out a management plan to attract missing species.

Objectives:

After completing the activity, students should be able to:

1. Research and describe the habitat needs for a specific selection of wildlife species. [1.2, 1.4, CA4, SC3]
2. Evaluate the habitat quality of these species in their outdoor classroom. [1.3, SC4]
3. Develop a management plan to improve the outdoor classroom wildlife habitat. [1.10, 3.2, 3.3, 4.6, SC8]
4. Present plans to the class using visual aids. [1.8, 2.1, 4.1, CA1, CA6, FA1]
5. Select and implement a management plan. [1.5, 3.8, CA5]

Materials:

paper, pencils, writing surface, student copy page, access to research materials

Background:

A **habitat** can be defined as the environment or place in which the life needs—food, water and protective cover—of an organism, population or community are supplied. Ask students to describe the habitat needs for a well-known wildlife species such as the bald eagle. (A river or other large body of water where fish and trees for perching are available.) People have the same habitat needs of food, water and protective cover. What might happen to a wildlife species if any one of the three "elements" of its habitat were to disappear? The species would either have to find a new place or perish.

Procedure:

1. Have students read "Snips and Snags" in the November issue of *Outside In*.
2. Tell students that they are going to research the habitat needs of **five** Missouri wildlife species (from a list of fifteen species) and then inspect their outdoor classroom to determine if it provides the habitat needs for those species.
3. Provide each student with a copy sheet. You may wish to have the students work individually or in

groups. Ask them to select five wildlife species from the list and add the names of these species to their charts. Review the kind of information that they need to record for each species (preferred foods, sources of water and preferred protective cover).

4. Following their research, conduct an outdoor classroom inspection and have students record their findings in the last two columns of the chart.
5. In groups of 3-4 have students develop a management strategy to attract missing species. Plans should be feasible, as the winning team may have their plan incorporated in the outdoor classroom.
6. Have teams present their management plans. Each presentation must include some kind of visual aid (power point, diorama, poster, mural, cartoon strips, etc.).
7. After all teams have made their presentations, have students (or a panel of faculty and parents) vote for a management plan that could be conducted in your outdoor classroom.
8. Discuss the winning team's plan as a class and make any necessary modifications. Have the class implement the plan and monitor the area for signs of increased wildlife use.



Tell us about your management plan! Describe your class' winning plan and how it was implemented into your outdoor classroom. What changes in wildlife composition have occurred because of your plan? Send your results to: *The Resource*, Missouri Department of Conservation, Education Programs, P.O. Box 180, Jefferson City, MO 65102-0180.

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I. Select **five** Missouri animals from the list that follows. Research the habitat preferences for each species and note this information on the chart below. Inspect your outdoor classroom to determine if each species' habitat needs are satisfied here. If not, suggest improvements to the outdoor classroom that would attract them to the area.



Woodpecker	Fox or Gray Squirrel	Flying Squirrel	Salamander	Toad
Black-Capped Chickadee	Raccoon	Butterfly	Rabbit	Skunk
Nuthatch	Opossum	Shrew	Honey Bee	Owl
Results of Library or Internet Research				
Name of Animal	Food Preferences	Source of Water	Protective Cover Preferences	Is There Evidence That the Animal Occurs Here?
Results of Outdoor Classroom Inspection				
				If Not, What Could Be Done To Attract The Animal?

- II. In groups of 3-4, develop a management strategy to attract the missing species of your list. Present this strategy to the rest of your class using a visual aid (power point, diorama, poster, mural, cartoon strips, etc.). Be creative, but remember that your project must be feasible!
- III. As a class, vote on the best management plan.
- IV. Implement the selected plan in your outdoor classroom and monitor the area for signs of new animal activity.